

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) announced today that the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Transportation Reauthorization Conference Report, agreed to by both the House and the Senate, which includes major funds to improve Southern Maryland's transportation infrastructure. The Transportation Reauthorization Conference Report authorizes federal funding for transportation projects over the next six years.

Four projects were funded at the request of Congressman Hoyer that will benefit Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties, including the Hughesville Bypass project; construction of an interchange connecting MD 5, MD 373, and Brandywine Road; widening a portion Chancellor's Run Road (MD 237); and construction and widening of an interchange at MD 4 and Suitland Parkway.

"This long overdue Conference Report provides \$286.5 billion in federal funds for highway, transit and highway safety programs so that those working to improve our transportation infrastructure can better accommodate the long-term planning and construction needs on the horizon," said Congressman Hoyer. "In our region, this will help to make our roads and bridges safer, reduce congestion, improve some of our most dangerous intersections, and ensure that our roads can handle higher volumes of traffic. This bill will also spur our nation's economic growth and will create jobs in every state since for every \$1 billion invested in federal highway and transit spending, approximately 47,500 jobs are created or sustained."

"This funding makes certain that the Hughesville bypass will be completed, a project that we have long needed to alleviate congestion at the hazardous and accident-prone intersection of Routes 5 and 231," Rep. Hoyer added. "I made a commitment two years ago to secure a third of the funding for the Hughesville bypass so that the state could begin construction on this important project. I am pleased that funding for this bypass was included in the final version of the bill to facilitate the expedited completion of the Hughesville bypass."

"Additionally, the Conference Report includes funds to improve Chancellor's Run Road and the Brandywine Interchange, making critical improvements both to improve the safety of the roadways and ensure that they will be able to support higher volumes of traffic."

"In comparison to other major American cities, the Washington region is doing poorly and the problem is getting worse – our traffic patterns are some of the most congested in the entire nation. It is clear that we must address this problem, and I believe the more than \$50 million secured in this bill for high-priority transportation projects in Southern Maryland will address some of our major transportation infrastructure needs and make it easier to travel through our state," concluded Hoyer.

Congressman Hoyer secured funding for the following projects that will benefit Southern Maryland. The total amount included for each project in the Conference Report follows:

Constructing the Hughesville Bypass along MD 5 (Leonardtown Road), \$11 million

One of the effects of rapid population growth, like that Southern Maryland has experienced in the past decade, is traffic congestion. This dramatic increase in population and the expansion of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station has resulted in transportation challenges.

The \$11 million authorized for the Hughesville Bypass allowed a third of the funding the state to jumpstart construction of the Bypass and will ultimately provide needed to complete this project.

This project was identified by the Tri-County Infrastructure Advisory Committee, and recognized by the state, as the second most pressing transportation need behind the widening of Rt. 235 so that Southern Maryland could accommodate Pax River's expansion during the BRACs of the 1990s. Both the widening of Rt. 235 and Hughesville bypass projects were seen as critical to the Navy during their consideration of Pax River as an appropriate location for expansion. As Rt. 235 was completed, planning and design for the Hughesville bypass project began. Congressman Hoyer pledged this funding to the state in 2003 which prompted the state to begin construction of this priority project.

"This represents the continued commitment of Congressman Hoyer to the partnership that includes all levels of government and the private sector, created during the 1990s to complete projects identified as crucial to Pax River and the Southern Maryland community," said St. Mary's County Delegate John Bohanan.

This project will create a new four-lane, divided highway from the end of the divided highway south of Hughesville to the end of the divided highway north of Hughesville. The project's design is complete and construction is underway.

Chancellor's Run Road, MD 237, \$12 million

As it exists, Chancellor's Run Road is a narrow two lane roadway with minimal shoulders and dangerous sharp curves. This roadway experiences tremendous periods of congestion and without improvements would be incapable of handling projected peak hour traffic volume resulting from residential and commercial growth in the Lexington Park region.

An improved MD 237 will serve the current needs and future expansion at Patuxent River Naval Air Station and would support associated growth in Southern Maryland. The project has been strongly supported by St. Mary's County elected officials and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

"I was pleased to work with Congressman Hoyer to call attention to the serious traffic problems on Chancellor's Run Road and I am grateful for the work that Congressman Hoyer has done to ensure that these funds were included in the Highway Bill last year and actually increased this year," said Delegate John Bohanan. "Delivering this federal funding is a real shot in the arm for transportation projects such as Chancellor's Run Road. Without this federal commitment, the state would likely not have started this widening for many more years."

This funding will provide nearly a third of the funding necessary to complete this project to upgrade and widen Chancellor's Run Road from Pegg Road to MD 235. The planning and design of this project is underway.

New Interchange Connecting Branch Avenue (MD 5), MD 373, and Brandywine Road, \$16 million

Severe traffic congestion during peak hours at this intersection affects drivers in Southern Prince George's County, Southern Maryland and commuters to and from Washington, DC. And, traffic volume is only expected to increase as the area grows.

This funding will provide nearly a third of the funds necessary for the design and construction of an interchange connecting Branch Avenue (MD 5), MD 373, and Brandywine Road and the widening of Branch Avenue between Moore's Road and US 301. It will improve the safety of this dangerous intersection and will help to reduce traffic congestion in the entire region.

Federal funding will ensure that this project occurs since it has been on hold awaiting additional funding, and only thirty percent of the design has been completed. The design is expected to take two years to complete and the construction is expected to take three years.

New Interchange Connecting MD 4 and Suitland Parkway, \$4 million (A total of \$15 million included in the bill for this project.)

The Suitland Parkway Interchange project would expand a major corridor from Calvert County in Southern Maryland to Prince George's County and Washington, DC, and improve access to the military bases in Southern Maryland. It is a major connector to numerous federal government facilities and military installations and these funds will ensure that transportation to these facilities remains safe and efficient and will ease pressure on the congested Beltway.

Congressman Hoyer secured the federal funds to design and construct the MD 4 and Suitland Parkway Interchange and has secured more than \$42 million to keep Suitland Parkway safe and efficient. The funds included in today's bill will be used to widen the interchange with the addition of one general use lane in each direction.

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